



**MATT BLACK**, Sun, Oct 29, 2017  
Five Solas series

# 5 | Ephesians 1:3-14

## TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY

*He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. EPHESIANS 1:5-6*

### **Outline**

What is God's Glory?

**1. The Greatest Expression of God's Glory: His Son (1:3-4)**

- The Person of Blessing
- The Realm of Blessing
- The Time of Blessing
- The Purpose of Blessing

**2. The Motivation for God's Glory: His Pleasure (1:5-6)**

- Motivated by Love
  - God's Love is Displayed Tangibly in the OT
  - In Love He Predestined You
- Motivated by Praise

**3. The Benefactors of God's Glory: His People (1:7-10)**

- We get Forgiveness
- We get a Future

**4. The Enjoyment of God's Glory: Our Inheritance (1:11-14)**

- Enjoy Your Inheritance
- Enjoy God's Ownership
  - This sealing authenticates
  - This sealing marks one's property
  - This sealing protects from tampering or harm
- Enjoy God's Downpayment of Heaven

I agree with Jonathan Edwards, who proclaimed: “It is clearly evident from Scripture, that God’s glory is the ultimate goal of the work of our redemption by Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

Charles Spurgeon says much the same when he writes, “The great end of God in Christ was the manifestation of his own glorious attributes.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, God’s ultimate goal for sending his Son to earth was to glorify himself: his love, his mercy, his holiness, his justice – in short, his glory. God is the supreme good, so it is right for God to display the beauty of his holiness. The Lord says that we are not to rob him of his glory. We are to give him all the credit for what he has done through Christ.

“Thus says God, the Lord,  
who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
who gives breath to the people on it  
and spirit to those who walk in it;  
6 “I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness;  
I will take you by the hand and keep you;  
I will give you as a covenant for the people,  
a light for the nations,  
7 to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness.  
8 I am the Lord; that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other,  
nor my praise to carved idols” (Isa 42:5-8).

Even back in Isaiah, 700 years before the birth of Jesus, God is saying, “I change lives. I redeem lives. I, the creator call you people who are spiritually blind out of darkness. Don’t attribute my salvation to idols.” My glory I will not give to another.

God gets the credit for salvation. Five hundred years ago, Martin Luther rediscovered that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, according to the Scriptures alone. Therefore, God alone gets all the glory.

**Don’t rob his glory. Don’t be a “glory thief.” Don’t take credit for his glory.** Instead, **reflect** his glory. “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Mt 5:16).

As we ponder that, I want to share with you a story about a very interesting well-educated Greek philosopher whose name is Dr. Alexander Popaderos. And Dr. Popaderos every summer on the island of Crete taught a class on ethics for two weeks. And this particular summer just as he was getting ready to close the class, the last few minutes of the class, he said, “Now are there any questions before we go?” And just as he was getting ready to say, “OK then you’re dismissed,” a little man in the back of the room, a rather timid looking man, sort of carefully raised his hand and said, “Dr. Popaderos.” “Yes?” “I

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Edwards. *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol 1, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 110.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Spurgeon. *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol 17, Sermon 986, “Victor Emmanuel, Emancipator” (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1871), 217.

have a question.” “Yes, what is it?” He said, “I’d like to know, what is the meaning of life?”

As you can imagine, people were ready to go home, and they were very irritated by this little fellow’s heavy question!

Dr. Popaderos very quickly quieted the group, he said to the class, “You know, if you don’t mind I’d like to answer that question.” He reached into his back pocket, and took out his wallet. He took out of the wallet a little mirror about the size of a fifty-cent piece, honed down on the edges, kind of sparkling. And then he told this tale, he said, “When I was a child, I began to realize that I could have so much fun with that mirror. I would simply catch the glint of the Sun, and shine that mirror into an otherwise darkened place. As I grew older I began to learn that this is no child’s toy. This is really a metaphor for my life. Now I am not the light—I am not the source of the light. I am simply a broken mirror fragment. But if I allow the sun to shine on my mirror fragment, it is amazing what light I can bring into darkness.” Then he said, “Ladies and Gentlemen, that is the meaning of life.”

Each of us is a mirror fragment. We are not the Light. We are not the source of the Light. We are simply a broken mirror fragment. But when we permit the SON of God to reflect from our mirror fragment, and then bounce off into the life of a darkened heart, there can be change, there can be illumination. This is the meaning of life.

The first question of the Westminster catechism says the same thing. Q: What is the chief end (ultimate goal) of man? I.e. What is the meaning of life? A: To glorify God and enjoy him forever. John Piper even more clearly said, we are to “glorify God *by* enjoying him forever.” Amen! Let’s enjoy God’s glory: his love, his mercy, his kindness, his holiness, his justice, his power and goodness. This is the meaning of life. But let’s ask more specifically: what is God’s glory.

---

## WHAT IS GOD’S GLORY?

---

The word “glory” in Hebrew is “kabod” and means “weightiness.” In Greek its “doxa” and it means to “give the right opinion of.” God wants you to be enjoy the grandeur of who he is. There is an awesomeness in God that makes him God. We feel the greatness and the weight of God’s presence in so many ways. “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psa 19:1). Have you ever caught a glimpse of God’s creation and had your breath taken away? God’s glory is the manifestation of his person and character. There was no time God’s glory was more clearly manifested than in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. That’s what Ephesians 1 says. Let’s stand and read God’s Word.

Ephesians 1:3–14, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his

**purpose**, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory**. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory.**” *This is God’s Word.*

**St. Peter’s Restaurant.** One of the oldest places in business in the history of the world is St. Peter’s Restaurant in Salzburg, Austria. They began serving meals in 803. One of the first customers were Emperor Charlemagne. But there is coming a day when St. Peter’s Restaurant will stop serving meals. That is the day when Jesus comes. But there is **never a day when the church will stop reflecting God’s glory**. We will praise God and reflect his glory forever and ever!

In a way, this last “sola” of the reformation is simply to give God glory for what he has done! To God alone be the glory. Paul takes eleven verses to say this. He says several times: “to the praise of his glory” (1:6, 12, 14). Let’s say it together: “to the praise of his glory”! Why should we praise God and give him all the glory? Because he’s expressed his glory in his Son who gives us all blessings in our lives.

---

## 1. THE GREATEST EXPRESSION OF GOD’S GLORY: HIS SON (1:3-4)

---

God’s glory blesses us. That’s a strange way of saying something, but it’s true. God expresses his holy presence to sinful human beings through his Son Jesus Christ.

Let’s say “blessed be God” for his greatest gift (1:3). All that we have comes from our union with Christ. Verse 3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.” In our English translation, verses 3 through 14 are stretched out over several sentences, but when Paul wrote this, it was one sentence of over 200 Greek words! Paul is brimming over with powerful words in trying to describe all the spiritual blessings we have in Christ, and it is as if he almost gets lost in his praise. Each word is bursting with meaning, and it is all one long continuous thought.

Paul is praising God for the salvation we have in Christ. He’s praising him for the salvation he is going to explain is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, and to the Glory of God alone. This kind of doctrine calls for doxology because it fills our hearts with praise! So after the doctrine we see nothing but doxology. Doxology is our response to doctrine! This is an important point: you and I have not truly understood doctrine, until it results in doxology!

### THE PERSON OF BLESSING

We are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. What does that mean? It’s speaking of our union with Christ. The motto of the book of Ephesians is “in Christ.” Everything we have and everything we are comes from him. He is “the image of the invisible God” so that “in everything he might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness

of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col 1:15, 18-20). As John says, “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known” (Jn 1:18). Jesus has manifested and revealed who God is. If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. In the cross, he has manifested God’s love, grace, mercy, and justice. I cannot attribute my salvation to anything or anyone else.

We cannot attribute our right standing before God to our good efforts or our good heart. We would be lying to ourselves. Everything we have comes from God’s greatest gift to us: his Son. Paul said, “As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Gal 6:14). Jesus is the greatest and most perfect, and most exalted expression of God’s glory. All the beauty of God’s heart, we see in Christ and his cross. That’s the person of God’s glory. He blesses us with God’s glory. Look now at the realm of God’s blessing. Where do we come to feel and touch and know the glory and presence of God?

### THE REALM OF BLESSING

We are told that we are “blessed... in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places” (1:3). When Paul says “heavenly places” – he’s talking about another realm – specifically, the realm where God dwells. God dwells everywhere, but if we were in the direct presence of God in this body, we would die. But in our spirit we can live where God lives – “in heavenly places.” We should be “practicing the presence of God” as the Puritans used to say. David says, “In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psa 16:11). In other words, you may be suffering horrifically on earth, but you are “blessed” in heavenly places. The realm he’s speaking of is a real realm – it is where God dwells. Like in the Lord’s prayer, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Mt 6:10, KJV). What? Where is heaven? It is the realm where God’s throne is. It is the realm where all the angelic host obey his voice. His will is done in heaven. When we live in the glory and presence of God, we are living in obedience. We are experiencing the rule and reign of Christ’s lordship. Oh, rule over me King Jesus! Your will be done. That’s the realm of God’s glory. When did God choose me to be blessed by his glory in Christ. Great question. Glad you asked. Ask your neighbor: “When did God bless me?” He blessed you before time began.

### THE TIME OF BLESSING

These spiritual blessings were foreordained in Christ before time, “before the foundation of the world.” We are “chosen in Christ” before time began. ***That pretty much takes you and me out of the equation.*** All glory be to God. I could not be part of the equation, because God decided to display his glory in Christ through you and me before we existed. *Before. We. Existed.* Where were you before the foundation of the world? What effort did you expend before the worlds were formed? That’s what you have contributed to your salvation. God says profound things to us that transcend time. “I have loved you with an everlasting love” (Jer 31:3). “Your name is engraven upon the palms of my hands” (Isa 49:16). God displays his glorious love for you before time so that we will have nothing to boast in but his love.

## THE PURPOSE OF BLESSING

These spiritual blessings in Christ have a purpose: “even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him” (1:4). He blesses us to transform us. All the pain and suffering of this life is pushing us toward a real Savior who is transforming us and making us holy and set apart from this world. You are blessed in Christ today! God is glorified by your transformation. His weightiness is spread through your family and co-workers and friends when they see you change.

**Romans 8:28–29**, “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (**Eph 2:10**). You are God’s masterpiece in Christ!

**Transition:** Ok, so we ought to praise God for expressing his glory through Christ. It’s because of Christ we have every spiritual blessing in the realm where God is.

But secondly, we ought to praise God because of what motivates glory. Why does God want to do good to us? It’s his **pleasure** and **joy** to do good to ungodly, undeserving, hell-bound sinners! How many of you can say “to God alone be the glory” because “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings” (**Psa 40:2**, KJV)? Why should God bring glory to his name through you? It’s what he wants to do. It’s his pleasure.

## 2. THE MOTIVATION FOR GOD’S GLORY: HIS PLEASURE (1:5-6)

Look at Ephesians 1:5-6, “In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed [accepted] us in the Beloved” (1:5-6). God has chosen us – elected us, and he has done so unconditionally – not based on any merit in us. Was there anything good in me that God would love me? No.

He loves me because it brings him joy to **love** the unworthy, to **bless** the ungodly, to **exalt** the broken and bleeding sinner, to “open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon” (Isa 42:7). It pleases God to

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!” (**Isa 55:1**).

Listen to **Isaiah 35:4-7**, “Behold, your God ...He will come and save you. 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 6 then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; 7 the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.” Behold your God! It is his joy to lift you out of your sin. It is his joy to restore what you have lost. It is his joy to value you and welcome you and speak peace to you when all you’ve known is despair. Behold your God! It is his pleasure to love you. That’s what Paul says in Ephesians. “In love he predestined you for adoption

as children through Jesus Christ.” Why? “To the praise of his glorious grace.” All glory to God alone because of his love.

### **MOTIVATED BY LOVE**

Before you were born, before your father or mother, before the creation of the universe, God chose you for blessing. Why? **“In love.”** Whoa. Stop right there. God loved me, a sinner? Yes! God chose you to **share in his glorious presence** with you because of love. You are “partakers of the divine nature” because of love (**2 Pet 1:4**). Soli Deo Gloria. All glory be to God. Oh how he loves you. The greatest gift of love God can give you is his Son. Jesus radiates the glory of God!

### ***God’s Love is Displayed Tangibly in the OT***

In the Old Testament, during the time of the Tabernacle and first Temple, you could actually see the manifestation of God’s glory. It was breath-taking. By day his presence would be like a glory cloud that protected you from the scorching heat of the sun. At night his presence was a glory cloud that brought warmth to every one in the camp of Israel and protected them from the cold. We are called to take shelter and safety in Jesus, our **Glory Cloud**. “Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. 2 This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him” (**Psa 90:1-2**, NLT).

### ***In Love He Predestined You***

When I was younger, I moved from Chicago to Louisiana. I was the strange city boy! I can remember a game of stick ball on the playground, and I was the last one picked. Listen God doesn’t choose us because of anything in us. It is because of His goodness and glory He chooses us. But we are chosen unto holiness. Holiness means to be “separated, set apart” for God’s special purposes. We are called “saints.” Holy ones!

### **MOTIVATED BY PRAISE**

God is motivated by the praise of his own glory. Paul says God’s motive for his glory is “to the praise of his glorious grace” (**1:6**). This sound terrible when it comes to human beings, but God is jealous of his glory. Isaiah said it in a different way in the Old Testament. God says in **Isaiah 42**, that he will not share his glory with another. What does that mean? It means God gets all the credit for being the Savior. The Father planned our salvation, the Son provided for our salvation, and the Spirit applies our salvation and transforms us into the image of Christ. God, the holy Trinity gets all the praise. To God alone be the glory.

Why would God say he’ll not share his glory, when we do share his glory to the extent that one day we will be “glorified” with him (**Rom 8:29-30**)? Ah the limits of the English language. God forbids anyone from taking credit for delivering us in any way. All saving, all delivering, and good things that occur in our lives are gifts from God. Your idols did not give you any benefits in life. If anything good happened to you it came from God.

St. Paul says, “What do you have that hasn’t already been given to you, and why do you boast if it was a gift?”

That’s why when we get to heaven, we are not going to be discussing how you or I were better than anyone else. We are not going to be bragging about our intellect or our wealth,

our goodness or our salvation. We were dead in trespasses and sins. If we have anything at all, it's a gift from God.

---

### 3. THE BENEFACTORS OF GOD'S GLORY: HIS PEOPLE (1:7-10)

---

#### WE GET FORGIVENESS

God provides Redemption in Christ (1:7a) – God takes sin seriously! Verse 7a, “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses.” What does “redemption” mean? It's primary usage in the Bible means, “to buy back from slavery.” By nature we are enslaved to sin. In Christ you no longer have to be a slave to sin!

God provides through Riches in Christ (1:7b). Verse 7b, “...according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.”

Explanation: God didn't reveal everything to Abraham. He told Him Christ would come through his seed. All nations of the world would be blessed through the seed of Abraham. Yet so much of God's plan in the Old Testament was shrouded in mystery. The details remained hidden. But when the Son of God came to earth, a quantum leap in understanding God's plan took place!

The mystery of His will is now that not only are the Jews to be saved, but the Gentiles are to be included in God's plan. We are to preach the Gospel to every creature. The destiny of the church is not segregated. We are set free from racism. We are to preach Christ to every creature!

We are set free from this world through Christ! Christ has been set before us! We see Him! We've been given all insight in order to understand His eternal purpose for us!

#### WE GET A FUTURE

The mystery of God's will was not to remain hidden! But he makes “known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth” (vs. 9-10). That is God is going to bring everything in the universe under one Head, that is Jesus Christ! In the fullness of time, God revealed what His purpose would be for the planet! We get so worried about everything around us. Don't you get worried? We need to trust God that he has a future planned for us. Every moment is planned. He says in **Jeremiah 29:11**, “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”

Some of you remember the frenzy of Y2K. Or in years past it was the prophecies of Nostradamus. Or the Aztec prophecies of 2012. Take no thought of these things! God from the beginning had a purpose and a plan for the planet. I promise you, the world will not be destroyed by nuclear bombs or wars or as a result of some Aztec prophecy. The world and the universe will be destroyed by Jesus Christ Himself when He unites all things to Himself and puts all His enemies under His feet! Dear brothers and sisters, the



Bible paints the day Christ comes as fearful for the lost. Are you “in Christ”? Then you will get a future and a hope.

God lavishes all of this on us in His wisdom and understanding. We live like we don't belong here because we can see it! It frees us from this wicked world. And one day we will be completely set free!!

## 4. THE ENJOYMENT OF GOD'S GLORY: OUR INHERITANCE (1:11-14)

### ENJOY YOUR INHERITANCE

***What is Your Inheritance?*** Did you know as a Christian, you have an inheritance? What inheritance? What is it? Let's read – **verse 11**, “In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will” (1:11). Later we read that the Holy Spirit is the down payment of your inheritance. Yes you will inherit all the glories of heaven, the cities with foundations of precious jewels, the streets of gold, the tree of life and the river of life. But that's just the dwelling place for you to be near God. God is your inheritance.

***Jesus Wants You Near Him.*** We are a predestined to receive God's inheritance as his own dear children. Jesus said, “In my Father's house are many mansions.... I go to prepare a place for you” (**Jn 14:1**). Christ wants you to be near him for all eternity. God chose us before the foundation of the earth for Himself and he predestined us to be part of His family. This world is not your home. You do not belong here. God is preparing a place for you, and God is preparing you for that place. “I am his, and he is mine” (**Song 2:16**). God's presence transcends the pains of this life. Can you say, “I have found him whom my soul loves”? (**Song 3:4**). Can you say you belong to Jesus and he belongs to you?

***He's Working All Things for This Inheritance.*** He says, he is working “all things according to the counsel of his will” for you. In other words, because God has something prepared for you (His Presence), he is preparing you for that inheritance. Yes, the Bible says we will inherit a city that has gold for streets, a river of life, a tree of life, a city that never sleeps but always praises God, a place of music and delightful learning and conversation (**Psa 16:11**), but most of all, our inheritance is the triune God. We will bask in his fellowship forever. He says, “You will be my people and I will be your God” (**Rev 21:3**). He says, I will “wipe away every tear from your eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away” (**Rev 21:4**).

***God Sought You.*** This inheritance is not a reward that you merited. It's a reward that Christ merited. You have done nothing for this salvation. That's why Paul is constantly saying: to the praise of his glory. Soli Deo Gloria. All Glory to Christ who has accomplished everything. You did not seek him. He sought you. He gets all the glory. This reminds me of Isaiah 43:6-7 where God shouts to the North and the South, to the East and the West, and he says, “Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, 7 everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.” We who know Christ are made for God's glory and not our own. He called us to display the glory of his love and the beauty of his holiness. Receive this truth

with deep humility. God has called you to enjoy your inheritance now. Enjoy the Holy Spirit. Enjoy the presence of God. All to the praise of his glorious grace!

### **ENJOY GOD'S OWNERSHIP**

Not only should you enjoy your inheritance, but enjoy God's ownership of you. Look at verse 12, it speaks of God **sealing** you: "...so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (1:12-13).

**What is Sealing?** This idea of sealing comes from the signet rings of kings which they used to authenticate a document hundreds and thousands of years ago. The king would melt wax on a scroll of some sort of document and he would put his signet ring on it to seal it. It is a seal of **ownership**. This is what is being spoken of here. Now there are three reasons for this sealing.

#### ***This sealing authenticates***

See with the king if someone had gotten a document with a law they didn't just go through with it unless it was really from the king that's why the seal proved this. Our seal states that God has said that we have eternal life and that comes straight from God. So it is an authentic thing.

#### ***This sealing marks one's property***

The sealing of the document shows that that document actually belonged to the king and that it was his property. The sealing of the Spirit shows that we are actually God's property. That we are not children of anyone else except for God.

#### ***This sealing protects from tampering or harm***

This seal also protected the document from being tampered with or harmed. If someone tampered with and changed something in the document then the seal would be broken. The same is with us. Once we have been sealed we cannot be tampered with or taken from God. It has been shown what God's intent for our lives is and it cannot be altered. God uses two instruments to seal us: the Word of Truth and the Person of the Holy Spirit.

**Sealed through the Word of Truth.** 1:13a- In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him..." Something that we have to understand when we look at the scriptures is that in order to be a Christian you had to **hear the word of truth and believe**. The Word of truth is transformative. It's the Word of the Gospel. So simple: "Jesus died for my sins." That's the Word of truth. It's on almost every page of Scripture. We must know that Romans 1:16 is true that "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes." This gospel is what saves. We trust in the work of Christ on the Cross, his **death** and **resurrection**. Not anything that you can do or have done. Nothing but Christ. We must understand that even though we heard and believed it wasn't our work. This idea is clear from the context when Paul writes that God chose us before the foundations of the earth. It was the work of God. The way God does this is through hearing His word and the Holy Spirit acting in changing our

hearts. God gets all the glory! Soli Deo Gloria! But not only are you sealed through the Word of truth, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit.

***Sealed by the Holy Spirit*** (1:13b). Ephesians 1:13, “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.” God Himself lives inside of you. You have it better than Moses who met with God at the burning bush and at the Tent of Meeting. You have it better than all the high priests of the Old Testament that entered into the Holy of holies. We have God in us. His Spirit has sealed us, and through Him we have power over sin, and assurance, and hunger for the Word of God and the world to come.

### **ENJOY GOD’S DOWNPAYMENT OF HEAVEN**

“Who [The Holy Spirit] is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory” (1:14). The word “guarantee” has the idea of *down payment*. This is essentially a down payment which will assure us of our future in Christ. I believe this story explains it rather well. A wealthy man called his faithful assistant into his office one day and said, “I’ve put your name in my will, and someday you’ll receive \$100,000. Since it may be a while before you get that legacy, I want to make you happy now by paying you the interest on that amount each year. Here is a check for \$1,000 as a starter.” The surprised clerk was doubly grateful. The prospect of the inheritance was certainly good news, but the money he received in advance gave him complete assurance that someday the entire \$100,000 would be his.

### **Engagement Ring**

The word “guarantee” also has the idea of *engagement ring*. Not only does it mean a down payment but in the truest sense this word speaks of an engagement ring. The Holy Spirit is the engagement ring for the believer who upon conversion is engaged to Christ and has become his bride for the future wedding feast. Now if a guy goes to a girl and says hey I love you, she shouldn’t go crazy and make all her future plans. However, if he say hey I love you will you marry me and gives her a diamond that’s a commitment. The same commitment that God has made to Christians by giving us the Holy Spirit. This commitment will one day be redeemed.

### **Conclusion**

In Isaiah 43, God says, “I will not share my glory with another.” We can take no credit for salvation. It’s Soli Deo Gloria – to God alone be the glory. We must give him all the glory. You say how do we do that? 1 Corinthians 10:31, “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” Do all to the doxa (right opinion) of God. In everything you do – give God credit. You be that broken mirror fragment. You shine the light of Jesus. May the message of your life be: to God be the glory. All that you have and all that you are and all that you will be is Soli Deo Gloria! To God alone be the glory!

---

SOLI DEO GLORIA

---